Appl. No.: 09/677,535
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Reply to Office action mailed November 4, 2003

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The title of the application has been amended to be more reflective of the pending claims.

Claims 1-13, 15-22, and 24-29 are currently amended; claims 30-338 are newly added. Upon entry of these amendments, claims 1-338 will be pending, of these claims 1, 6, 20, 29, 50, 67, 79, 93, 99, 107, 115, 129, 143, 151, 159, 173, 201, 214, 227, 240, 253, 266, 279, and 292 are independent.

The present invention relates to systems and methods for managing a plurality of interest-bearing transaction accounts for multiple clients so that the number of withdrawals during a month from the client transaction accounts is not necessarily limited. Funds of the managed client transaction accounts are held in one or more interest-bearing deposit accounts (which may also be FDIC-insured) in one or more banking institutions. Transfers and/or withdrawals from these deposit accounts are made in a manner that preserves their interest-bearing status regardless of the number of transfers and/or withdrawals made during a month.

Specifically, independent claims 1, 6, 20, 29, 99, 107, 115, 129, 201, 227, 253, and 279 recite that:

> the manner of making transfers and/or withdrawals from at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts preserves that account's interest-bearing status regardless of the number of said transfers and/or withdrawals from said at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts actually made during a month.[1]

And independent claims 50, 67, 79, 93, 43, 151, 159, 173, 214, 240, 266, and 292 recite that:

> more than six (6) transfers and/or withdrawals are made during a month from at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts.[2]

Both these limitations are supported in parent application serial no. 09/176,340 at page 1 line 21 to page 2 line 24, which has been incorporated by reference in the present application (at

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[1] Specifically, claims 1 and 6 recite "FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts"; claims 20, 29, 253, and 279 recite "insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts"; claims 99, 107, 115, and 129 recite "insured money market deposit accounts"; and claims 201 and 227 recite "insured interest-bearing non-demand deposit accounts

[2] Specifically, claims 50 and 67 recite "FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts"; claims 79, 93, 159, and 174 recite "insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts"; claims 143, 151, 266, and 292 recite "insured money market deposit accounts"; and claims 214 and 240 recite "insured interest-bearing non-demand deposit accounts

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page 1 lines 1-2). Particular embodiments of these withdrawal limitations are recited in dependent claims 30-49, 62-66, 74-78, 88-92, 94-98, 102-106, 110-114, 116-120, 130-134, 146-150, 154-158, 160-164, 174-178, 209-213, 222-226, 235-239, 248-252, 261-265, 274-278, 287-291, and 300-304, all of which individually recite one of the following more specific withdrawal methods:

> wherein one or more transfers and/or withdrawals from at least one of the insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts are requested in person (or: by mail) (or: by messenger) (or: requested by telephone and distributed by mail) (or: by automated teller machine).

These claims are also supported in parent application serial no. 09/176,340 at page 2 lines 17-20.

In one of this invention's further embodiments, its systems and methods provide FDIC insurance for client transaction accounts in excess of "the maximum FDIC insurance coverage allowed for each depositor in a FDIC-insured banking institution" (e.g., $100,000 for each category of legal account ownership) by distributing client funds among FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts in multiple banking institutions.

The Applicants submit that all the pending claims are now patentable because, *inter alia*, the withdrawal limitations described above are not found in the prior art in connection with managing client transaction accounts as recited.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner has rejected previously-presented claims 1-29 (not including these withdrawal limitations) as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. patent no. 6,189,785 B1 by Lowery ("Lowery"), U.S. patent no. 5,864,685 by Hagen and U.S. patent no. 5,291,398 by Hagan (collectively, the "Hagan patents"). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections because these references do not disclose or teach all the elements of the claims. Neither Lowery nor the Hagan patents, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the manners of withdrawing funds from the deposit accounts at the banking institutions that are now recited in all pending claims.

Because neither Lowery, nor the Hagan patents, nor the other art of record in this application disclose or teach all the limitations of the pending claims, in particular the described withdrawal limitations, this art does not anticipate these claims nor make them obvious. All pending claims are respectfully submitted to be patentable and their allowance is respectfully requested.

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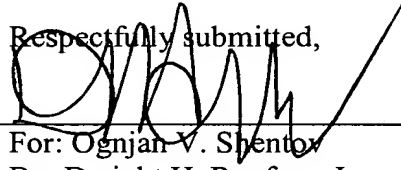Express Mail No. EV335859291US

CONCLUSION

The Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing amendments and remarks into the file of the above-captioned application. The Applicants believe that each ground for rejection or objection has been successfully overcome or obviated and that all the pending claims are in condition for allowance. They earnestly request reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's objections and rejections and allowance of the application.

The Applicants request an interview with the Examiner prior to any further action on the merits in the above-captioned application.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX A
CLAIMS 1-29 AS AMENDED AND WITHOUT MARKUP

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for managing a plurality of client demand accounts for one or more clients, wherein said client demand account funds are held in one or more FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts, which are not NOW accounts, at one or more banking institutions, said method comprising:

administering clients' deposits and/or transfers to and withdrawals and/or transfers from each of said client demand accounts;

determining on a regular basis one or more net transactions as sums of said deposits and/or transfers to and said withdrawals and/or transfers from said client demand accounts ;

using the determination of said one or more net transactions to cause funds to be deposited and/or transferred to or withdrawn and/or transferred from said one or more FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts, so that FDIC insurance coverage greater than the maximum FDIC insurance coverage allowed for each depositor in a FDIC-insured banking institution is effectively provided for each client, and wherein the manner of making said withdrawals and/or transfers from at least one of said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts preserves that account's interest-bearing status regardless of the number of said withdrawals and/or transfers from said at least one of said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts actually made during a month; and

updating a database comprising information for each client demand account with that client's deposits and/or transfers to and withdrawals and/or transfers from said each client demand account.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, further comprising steps of:

determining whether each client's funds held in a banking institution are more than a specified amount; and

distributing any amounts over said specified amount into at least one other FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit account at at least one other banking institution.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein clients' funds are deposited and/or transferred into their client demand accounts by at least one method selected

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from the group consisting of check or draft, wire or electronic transfer, ACH, third party credits, and a sweep from another account.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 2, wherein said specified amount is more than said maximum FDIC insurance coverage minus a predetermined amount but less than or equal to said maximum FDIC insurance coverage.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of determining a client's preferences for the amount of funds to be held in each of said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer system for managing a plurality of client demand accounts for one or more clients, wherein said client demand account funds are held in one or more FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts, which are not NOW accounts, at one or more banking institutions, said system comprising:

a database comprising information for each client demand account; and

a computer programmed to perform the steps of

administering clients' deposits and/or transfers to and withdrawals and/or transfers from each of said client demand accounts;

determining on a regular basis one or more net transactions as sums of said client deposits and/or transfers to and withdrawals and/or transfers from said client demand accounts ;

determining from said net transactions whether to deposit and/or transfer funds to or withdraw and/or transfer funds from said one or more FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts, so that FDIC insurance coverage greater than the maximum FDIC insurance coverage allowed for each depositor in a FDIC-insured banking institution is effectively provided for each client, and wherein the manner of making transfers and/or withdrawals from at least one of said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts preserves that account's interest-bearing status regardless of the number of said transfers and/or withdrawals from said at least one of said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts actually made during a month; and

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updating the database with each client's deposits and/or transfers to and withdrawals and/or transfers from said each client demand account.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer system of claim 6, wherein the clients' withdrawals and/or transfers from their demand accounts are by at least one method selected from the group consisting of drafts or checks, credit card, debit card, sweeps, wire or electronic transfers, and combinations thereof.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer system of claim 6, wherein the clients' deposits and/or transfers to their demand accounts are by at least one method selected from the group consisting of drafts or checks, sweeps, wire or electronic transfers, ACH credits, third party credits, and combinations thereof.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer system of claim 6 further programmed for

determining whether each client's funds at a banking institution are more than a specified amount, and

distributing any amounts over said specified amount into at least one other FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit account at at least one other banking institution.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer system of claim 6 further programmed for authorizing or rejecting payments requested from at least one client's demand account.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer system of claim 6 further programmed for distributing interest earned on at least one of said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts among the clients' demand accounts.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer system of claim 6 wherein said database comprises, for each client, information concerning the amount of that client's funds held in the FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1 wherein net transactions are determined for the clients' demand accounts.

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14. (PREVIOUSLY ADDED) The method of claim 1 wherein net transactions are determined for each banking institution.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1 wherein funds are deposited and/or transferred to or withdrawn and/or transferred from each banking institution so that each client's funds at a banking institution do not exceed a specified amount.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of authorizing or rejecting payments requested from at least one client's demand account.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1 wherein said database comprises, for each client, information concerning the amount of that client's funds held in the FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts and in said banking institutions.

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1 wherein clients' funds are withdrawn and/or transferred from their client demand accounts by at least one method selected from the group consisting of drafts or checks, credit card, debit card, sweeps, wire or electronic transfers, ACH debits, and combinations thereof.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 5 wherein funds are deposited and/or transferred to or withdrawn and/or transferred from said FDIC-insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts in dependence on the pre-determined client preferences.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for managing a plurality of client demand accounts, the funds for the client accounts being held in one or more insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts, which are not NOW accounts, at one or more banking institutions, said method comprising:

administering client deposit, withdrawal, and transfer transactions against their client demand accounts by crediting or debiting client funds in the insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts so that each client's funds held in each banking institution do not exceed a specified amount;

determining on a regular basis one or more net transactions as sums of the credited and debited transactions;

on a regular basis, causing funds to be deposited and/or transferred to or withdrawn and/or transferred from the insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts at said banking

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institutions in dependence on the pre-determined one or more net transactions wherein the manner of making transfers and/or withdrawals from at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts preserves that account's interest-bearing status regardless of the number of said transfers and/or withdrawals from said at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts actually made during a month; and

updating a database comprising client information for each client demand account with the received transactions against the client demand accounts.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20 further comprising a step of receiving client transactions against the client demand accounts.

22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20 wherein net transactions are determined for client demand accounts,.

23. (PREVIOUSLY ADDED) The method of claim 20 wherein net transactions are determined for each banking institution.

24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20, further comprising steps of:

determining whether each client's funds at a banking institution are more than said specified amount; and

distributing any amounts over said specified amount into at least one other insured and interest-bearing deposit account at at least one other banking institution.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20 wherein said specified amount is more than the maximum FDIC insurance coverage allowed for each depositor in a FDIC-insured banking institution minus a predetermined amount but less than or equal to said maximum FDIC insurance coverage so that FDIC insurance greater than said maximum FDIC insurance coverage is effectively provided for each client.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20, wherein clients' funds are deposited and/or transferred into said client demand accounts by at least one method selected from the group consisting of check or draft, wire or electronic transfer, ACH credit, third party credits, and a sweep from another account.

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20 wherein clients' funds are withdrawn and/or transferred from the client demand accounts by at least one method selected from the group consisting of drafts or checks, credit card, debit card, sweeps, wire or electronic transfers, ACH debits, and combinations thereof.

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20 wherein the insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts are selected for crediting client deposits and/or transfers to and debiting client withdrawals and/or transfers from said client demand accounts in dependence on pre-determined client preferences.

29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer system for managing a plurality of client demand accounts, the funds for said client demand accounts being held in one or more insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts, which are not NOW accounts, at one or more banking institutions, said system comprising:

a database comprising information for each client demand account including the amount of each client's funds held in said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts,

a computer programmed to perform the steps of

administering client deposit, withdrawal, and transfer transactions by crediting or debiting client funds in the insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts so that each client's funds held in each banking institution do not exceed a specified amount;

determining on a regular basis one or more net transactions as sums of the credited and debited client transactions;

on a regular basis, causing funds to be deposited and/or transferred to or withdrawn and/or transferred from the insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts at said banking institutions in dependence on the pre-determined one or more net transactions, wherein the manner of making transfers and/or withdrawals from at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit accounts preserves that account's interest-bearing status regardless of the number of said transfers and/or withdrawals from said at least one of said insured and interest-bearing deposit account actually made during a month; and

updating a database comprising client information for each client demand account with the received transactions against the demand client accounts.

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